

## **Supportive Testimony for Senate Bill 284**

Dear Members of the Human Services Committee,

Thanks for the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill 284, AA increasing the age from eight to eighteen years for an income eligible person to obtain medical assistance regardless of immigration status. My name is Sarah Ganong, and I'm a Hartford resident and the State Director of Connecticut Working Families. We're an advocacy organization fighting for an economy that works for everyone and a democracy where every voice matters.

Expanding access to HUSKY up to age 18 regardless of immigration status is an important step in making sure our immigrant community has access to the healthcare we all need and deserve, and I urge you to support Senate Bill 284 as it's before you today. But Working Families believes that our work doesn't end with expanding access up to age 18; we need to open access to HUSKY and healthcare to all immigrants of any age, including parents and adults.

Last year, our organization was proud to be part of the coalition that passed expanded access for Husky for children ages 0 - 8. But our work is not finished. Passage of this year's bill would ensure children do not age out of coverage in the middle of their childhood, being left stranded without any healthcare at all. Our staff have spoken to countless undocumented Connecticut residents, many of whom face serious health conditions and struggle to receive adequate care due to their lack of insurance. As a community, we must address this disgrace and ensure residents, regardless of immigrant status, are covered. The state of Connecticut *must* create a long-term plan to expand HUSKY access to our whole immigrant community.

There have been many bills discussed this legislative session about COVID-19 response and recovery. Senate Bill 284 must be among them. If we want our state to recover from COVID-19, we must work towards ensuring that undocumented immigrants of all ages can access healthcare. If we can't make these decisions in the midst of a global pandemic, when will we make them? The current limit of 0-8 years old leaves many children behind – it also leaves behind their parents, and other adults, and a large portion of essential workers who have been on the front lines of this pandemic.

Thanks for your time and consideration of this important issue. I hope you will pass Senate Bill 284 out of committee, and that you continue to consider

ways to ensure all immigrants, regardless of age or documentation status, can access healthcare.

Sincerely,

Sarah Ganong  
Hartford  
State Director | Connecticut Working Families